

# Small Game Harvest

## 2003-04

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### **Abstract**

The number of small game hunters increased 1.2% in the 2003-04 small game hunting season from 2002-03 levels. It is the first year license sales have increased in the last three. The estimated harvest increased from last season for bobwhite quail, cottontail, coyote, gray fox, gray partridge red fox, ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare, squirrel and woodcock and decreased for crow, pheasant, and raccoon.

### **Methods**

A sample of survey names was drawn from 2003-04 sports, small game, senior citizen small game, junior small game, and conservation patron license holders in proportion to the license sales for each county. Ten thousand surveys were mailed in early February. Surveys asked recipients for information on whether they hunted, type of licenses purchased, county of residence, species harvested, number of days hunting each species, and county of harvest for each species. These data were entered into the DNR UNIX production server and analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

### **Results**

Responses were received from 3,291 of the hunters surveyed. The response rate was 33%.

The number of people who bought small game, sportsman, senior citizen small game, non-resident small game, 5-day non-resident small game, or conservation patron licenses increased from 289,873 in 2002-03 to 293,438 in 2003-2004. The total number of days spent in the field pursuing small game increased by 6% during the 2003-04 season compared to last season. The estimated harvest increased from last season for bobwhite quail, cottontail, coyote, gray fox, gray partridge, red fox, ruffed grouse, snowshoe hare, squirrel, and woodcock and decreased for crow, pheasant, and raccoon (Table 1).

No corrections are made for response or prestige bias. Therefore the harvest estimates for some of the less hunted species (bobwhite quail, gray partridge, and gray fox,) are probably less accurate. Small sample size can also have an effect on the results of the counties of highest harvest. Because of this, counties of highest harvest should be viewed with caution. The twenty-year trend in small game harvest for all species is shown in Figure 1.

**Table 1.** *The number of small game hunters, percent of total hunters, days hunted, harvest, harvest/day, and top three counties of harvest for all small game species during the 2003-04 season.*

Species	Number of Hunters	Percent Hunting	Days Hunted*		Harvest*		Harvest/Day	Top Three Counties
Bobwhite Quail	1,262	0.4%	3,928	±2,421	1,696	±1,366	0.43	Green, Pierce, Dane
Cottontail	54,902	18.7%	268,263	±30,621	271,923	±43,695	1.01	Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Sauk
Coyote	30,077	10.3%	176,491	±36,492	37,048	±14,090	0.21	Green, Oconto, Waupaca
Crow	13,205	4.5%	56,063	±12,771	74,007	±26,017	1.32	Trempealeau, Marquette, Chippewa
Gray Fox	6,778	2.3%	44,101	±20,271	17,944	±11,761	0.41	Oconto, Dane, Grant
Gray Partridge	1,614	0.6%	9,195	±7,345	1,161	±1,092	0.13	Washington, Green, Oconto
Mourning Dove	22,770	7.8%	106,859	±27,014	145,603	±34,679	1.36	Outagamie, Portage, Waukesha
Pheasant	76,235	26.0%	492,694	±45,089	216,039	±28,000	0.44	Kenosha, Dane, Fond Du Lac
Raccoon	12,324	4.2%	83,023	±20,989	127,392	±40,786	1.53	Marathon, Pierce, Buffalo
Red Fox	11,708	4.0%	74,185	±23,992	7,767	±4,593	0.10	Portage, Marathon, Grant
Ruffed Grouse	103,466	35.3%	712,482	±60,012	320,130	±35,558	0.45	Price, Oneida, Marinette
Snowshoe Hare	12,412	4.2%	51,242	±13,128	34,370	±15,410	0.67	Sawyer, Chippewa, Price
Squirrel	76,235	26.0%	464,394	±42,601	578,395	±65,081	1.25	Waupaca, Shawano, Monroe
Woodcock	18,927	6.5%	111,590	±29,501	51,242	±14,343	0.46	Price, Marinette, Marathon

\* Confidence interval is 95%.

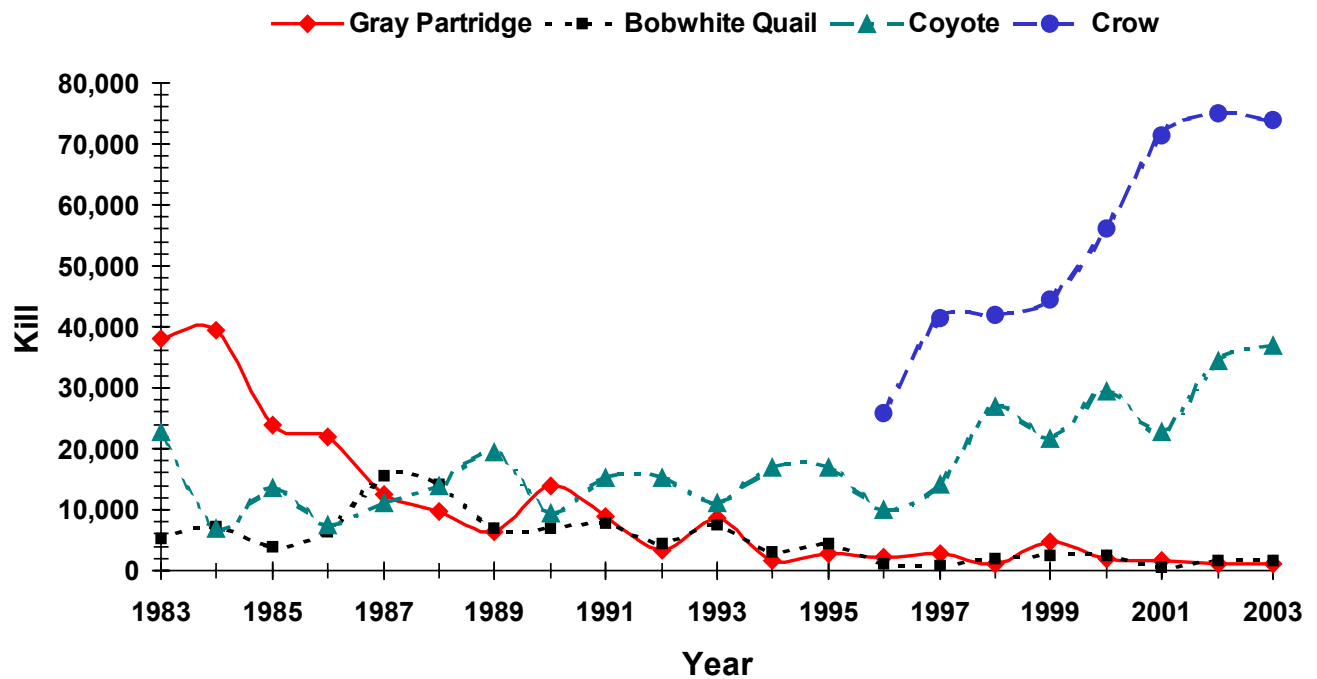
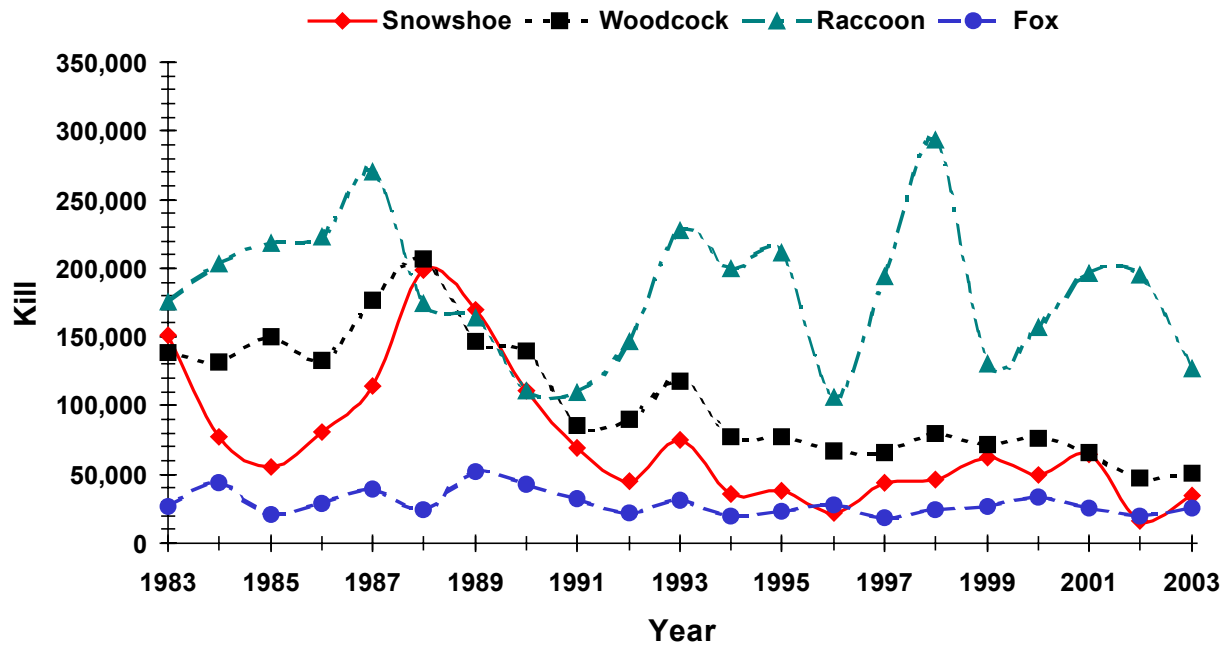


Figure 1. Small game harvest trends for all species 1983-2003.

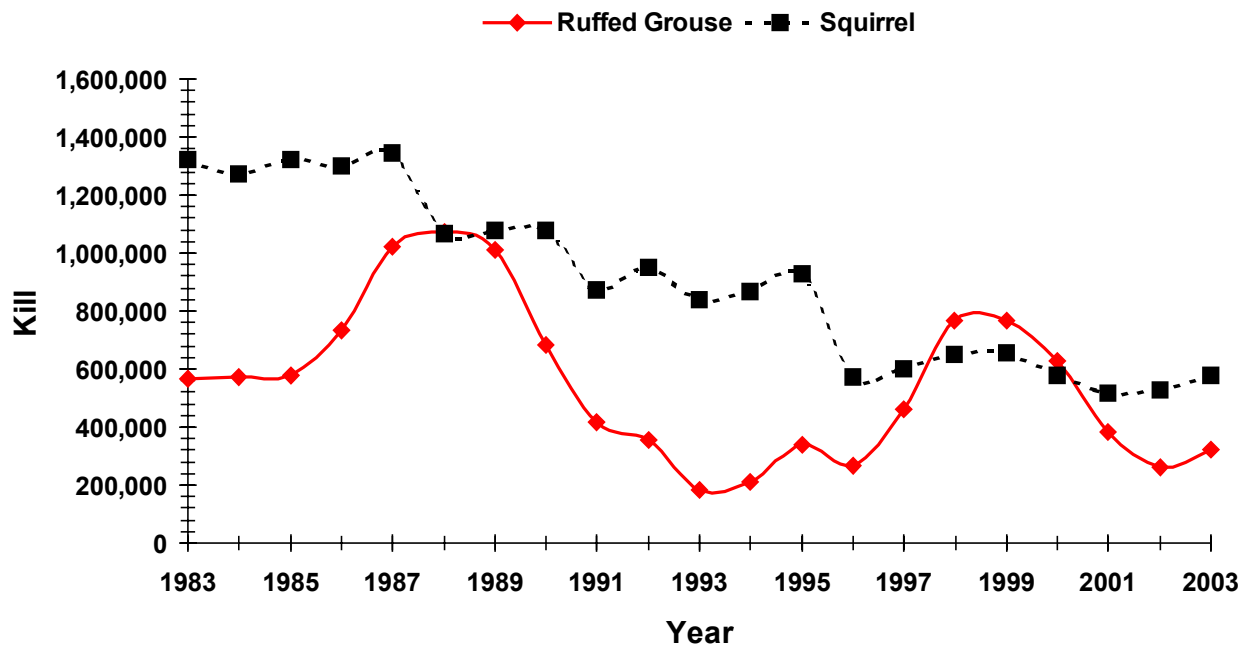
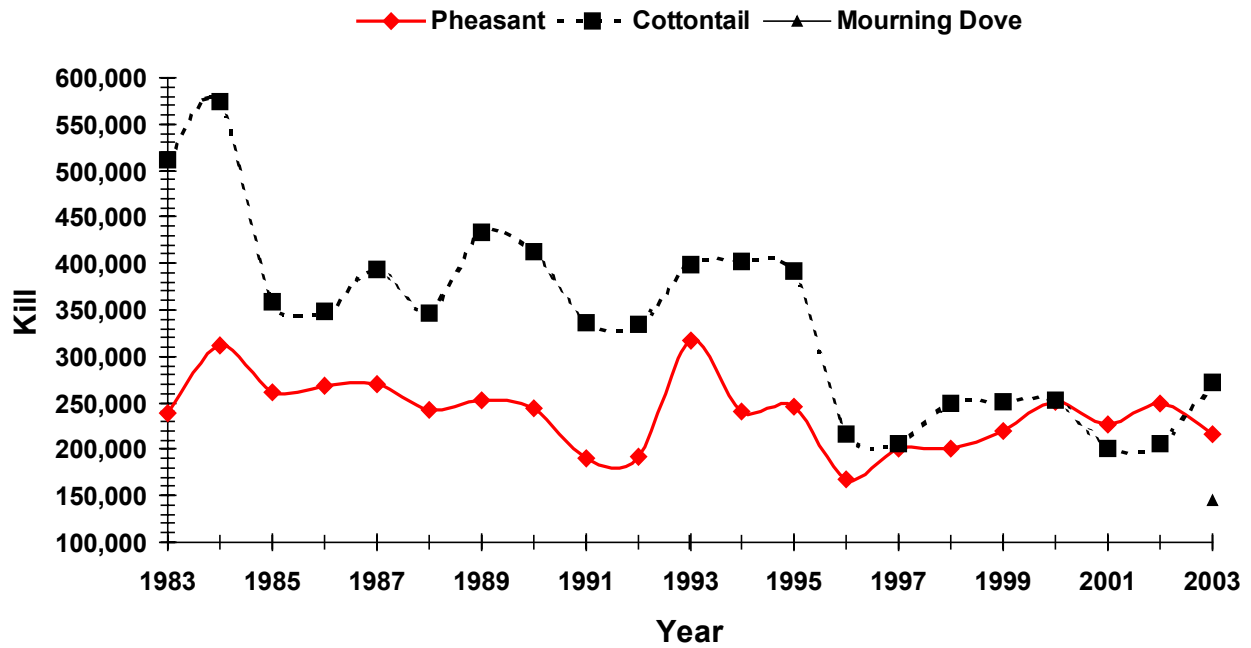


Figure 1. Small game harvest trends for all species 1983-2003 (continued).